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A Deeper Look at Reassigning Meaning

The article “Reassigning Meaning” by Simi Linton is structured in a way that introduced several subtopics, and gave an in depth explanation for the topic and its relatablity to Simi’s overall subject of Disablitities Rights. By using this structure it allows Linton to jump into different topics without losing the main focus of the article. For instance, Linton is able to inform the reader about language used to describe disabled people in sections like “Nice Words” and “Nasty Words” (226). In this article there was a great deal of specialized terminoligy since Linton had such a big focus on languaged used to speak about disabled people. I would say that this article is a persuasive article in that it wants to get the reader to be more supportive of the Disabilities Rights Movement, and be more aware of the language that they use to address the disabled community.

Simi Linton had many different purposes in mind when writing this piece of work. I feel that the main focus of the article was to redifine Disability. Linton urges her audience to reassign meaning behind disability. She speaks in an authoritative tone saying that the disabled do not need to be catogorized as a medical group, but rather as a political one (224). After establishing that main focus of the article thoroughly, Linton goes on to speak about language used in everyday life to speak about disabled people. She displays instances where people may be discriiminitory toward disabled people without even realizing it. In one section Linton talks about how disabled people are supposed to try to act “normal” and hide their disability as best they can. She tells a story where a child is taken out of their wheelchair for a class photo for the sake of “fitting in”. By showing these examples that everyday people may not look at as offesive it really gives a reader a chance to step back and really gain a deeper understanding of disabled people. Linton’s second purpose of informing the reader about language in the disabilities rights movement and language that an everyday person uses without thought fits in perfectly with her overall focus of reassigning meaning because to redefine a whole category one must have a thorough understanding of what the present definition is. By understanding the present definition it allows a person to see why there may be plausible reason to reassign meaning to disability.

The audience of this article is really the public. This article is a very informative and persuasive article that speaks to the public about understanding the struggles of a disabled person. The article asks the reader to step out of the everyday view of a disabled person and try on a new perspective. To accomplish the goal of redefining disability Linton understands that she has to speak to the general public of society and make her case.